

## **CHAPTER TWO                      EXISTING CONDITIONS**

This chapter presents existing transportation and land use conditions in the study area.

The following data collection and public outreach steps were taken to develop the inventory in this chapter:

- ,        The consultant reviewed recently completed and relevant studies of Dutchess County and East Fishkill. A complete list of those studies is provided in Chapter One.
- ,        The consultant obtained data from PDCTC, Dutchess County Real Property and Tax Services (DC RPTS), and the Town of East Fishkill. In most cases, this was received in a digital format and could, therefore, readily be incorporated into maps created with GIS software.
- ,        The consultant visited the project area on multiple occasions, conducted an inventory, and collected additional data.
- ,        Two meetings with multiple stakeholders were held on January 4, 2001.
- ,        A public meeting was held on January 23, 2001.

Sections 2.1 and 2.2 present transportation and land use conditions in map, table, and text format.

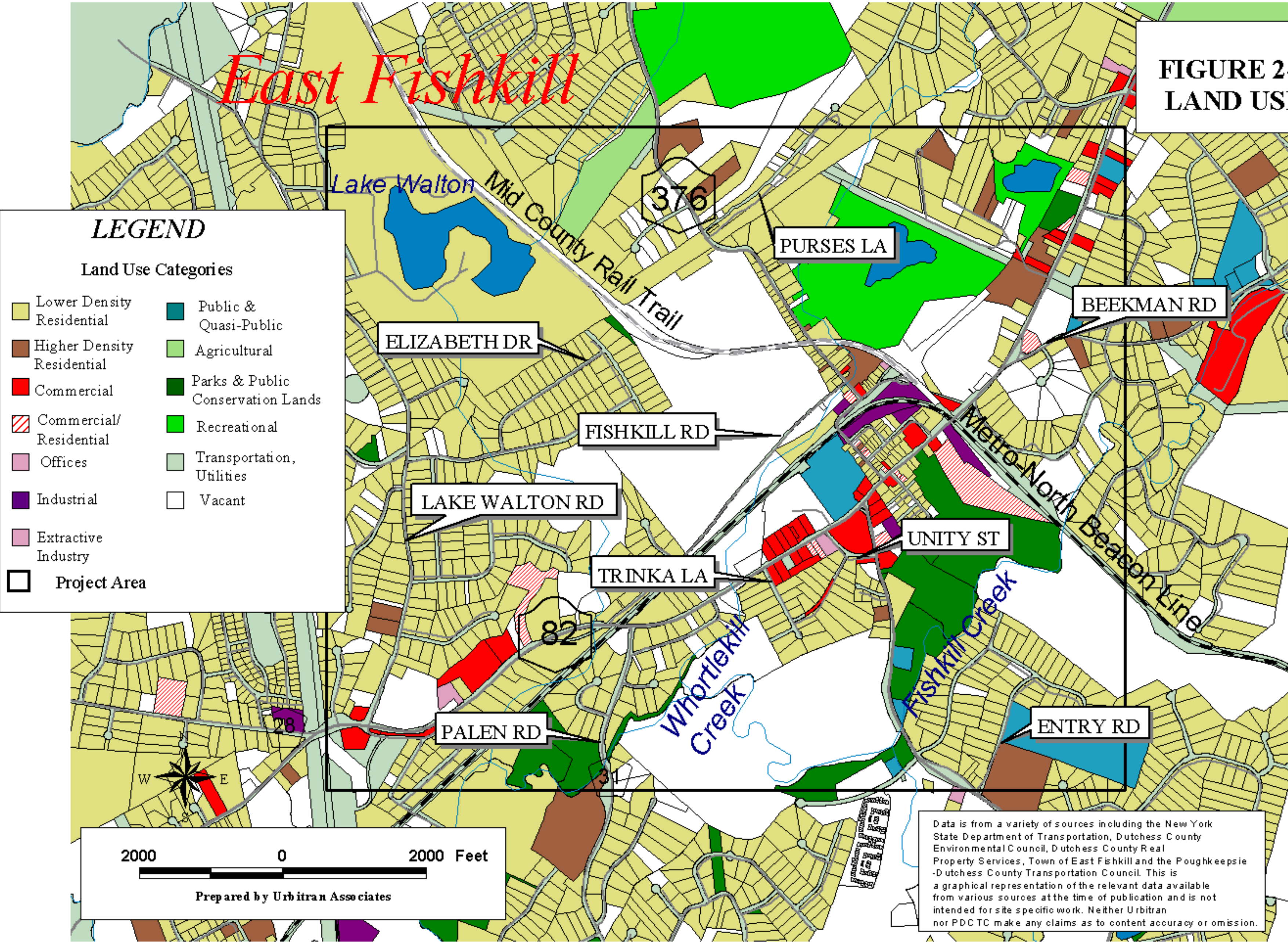
### **2.1        Land Use**

The connection between land use and pedestrian travel should not be underestimated, as land use patterns help determine demand for walking and the density of development helps determine the feasibility of walking trips. This study also considers planned and proposed developments in the project area, as they may provide excellent opportunities to introduce pedestrian infrastructure to meet current and future demand.

#### ***Existing Land Use***

Figure 2-1 provides an overview of current land uses in the project area. Although thirteen categories of use are present, it may be observed that the majority of land within the project area is lower density housing, represented in pale yellow. There are some areas of higher density housing, shown in brown, distributed throughout the project area. Commercial use, shown in red, is almost all located along Route 82, with concentrations between Trinka Lane and Unity Street and at the intersection with Route 376. Industrial uses, in purple, are concentrated northeast of the Hamlet Center along the MTA/Metro-North

**FIGURE 2-1  
LAND USE**



Railroad Beacon Line near its former junction with the Maybrook Line. Other important uses are public & quasi public, which include the municipal buildings off Route 376 and Gayhead School, and parks & public conservation lands, most notably the Hopewell Recreation Area just north of the Municipal Complex.

In summary, the project area is generally consistent with the land use pattern of the Town of East Fishkill, which is primarily low density residential. However, a mix of uses is also present, particularly in and around the Hamlet Center. The presence of different land uses at a sufficient density encourages walking as a viable mode of travel, and the land use pattern in the study area appears to be consistent with this.

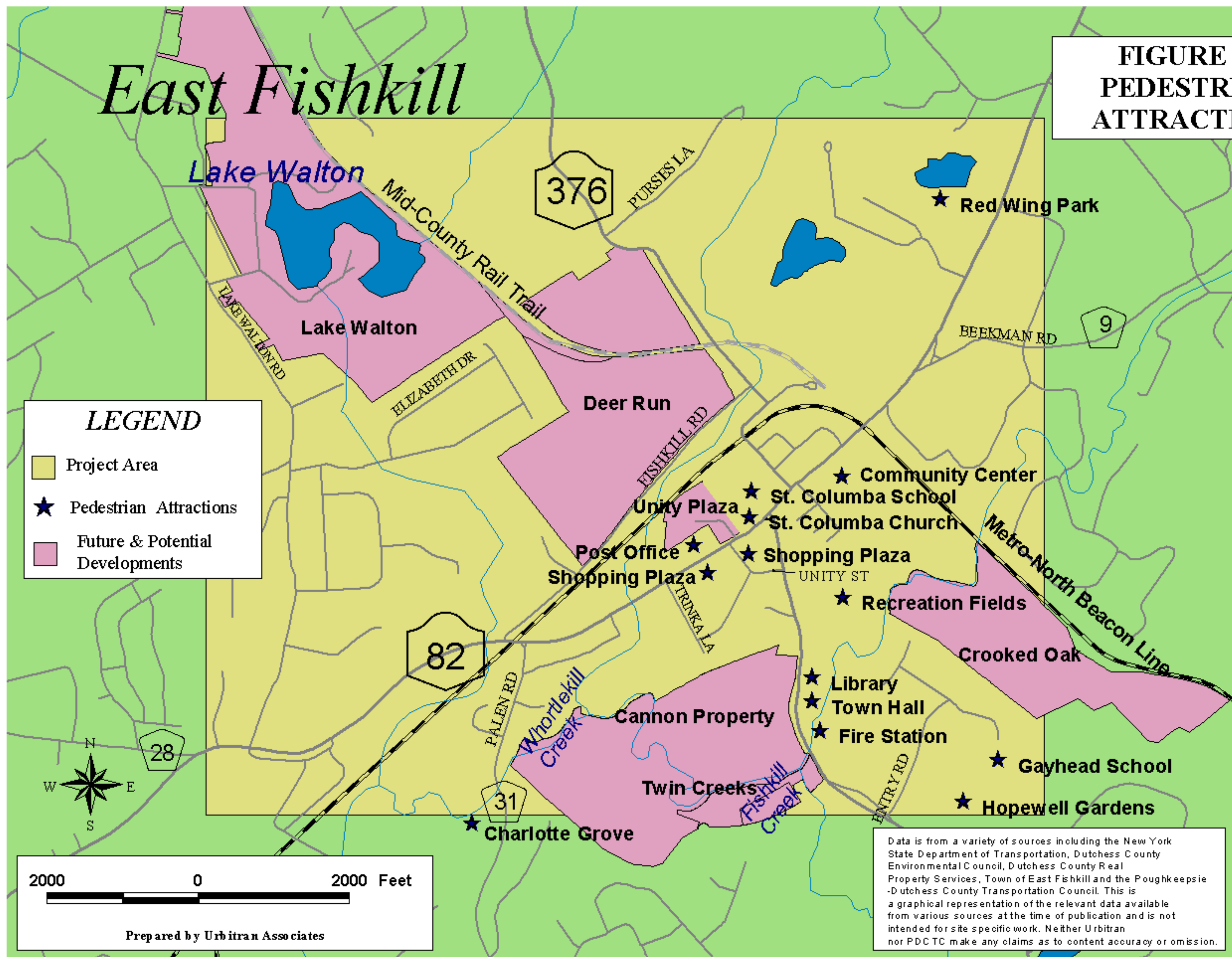
### ***Major Pedestrian Attractions***

Figure 2-2 shows the major pedestrian attractions in the project area. These locations were identified by the project partners based on their knowledge of the area. Origins and destinations of a significant number of pedestrian trips can reasonably be expected at these locations. A few qualifying statements should be made here. First, some of these destinations may not currently be associated with much pedestrian activity because of limitations in current pedestrian access. Second, the residential neighborhoods in the project area may have the potential to generate a significant number of pedestrian trips, but have no single location that can be identified and shown on the map.

Following is a brief description of the pedestrian attractions shown in Figure 2-2:

- , *Charlotte Grove* is a mobile home park off Palen Road with many households that do not own cars. Although no sidewalks or paved shoulders are present on Palen Road, this generator is well within walking distance to the Hamlet Center.
- , *Unity Plaza, Post Office, and Shopping Plazas* on either side of Unity Street are major attractions within the commercial area on Route 82. This concentration is probably the most significant pedestrian generator in the project area.
- , *St. Columba Church and School* attract many students and church goers at particular times of the week and the day. Their proximity to other attractions provides walking opportunities.
- , *Community Center* - This recently built facility holds a number of community events and is not far from the center of the Hamlet.
- , *Red Wing Park* features a swimming area that attracts numerous trips on a seasonal basis.





- , The *Hopewell Recreation Area* is the major facility for youth organized sports and recreation in the Town of East Fishkill. As such, it generates many trips by children and teens too young to drive themselves.
- , The *Library, Town Hall, and Fire Station* form a municipal complex just south of the Hamlet Center. Despite its proximity, there are no pedestrian facilities connecting it to the Hamlet Center.
- , *Gayhead School* is an elementary school in the southeast corner of the project area. Currently, all students are bused to the school.
- , Next to Gayhead School is *Hopewell Gardens*, a higher density residential development off of Route 376.

### ***Future Development***

Figure 2-2 also shows a number of areas that are labeled and designated as future or potential developments. The project partners have identified these areas as ones where developers have made formal or informal proposals to the Town. The effect of these projects would be to fill in the remaining large parcels of undeveloped land in the project area with medium density development and increase the need for pedestrian facilities.

- , The *Cannon Property* is a vacant piece of land south of the Hamlet Center in between Palen Road and Route 376. The parcel is in a R1 Zone, with an overlay Conservation Residential Zone. An application for development of the land is in preliminary stages. The developer has had informal discussions with the Town and is expected to propose 330 mixed use units.
- , The *Crooked Oaks* site is located between the Hopewell Recreation Area and Fishkill Creek to the west and the MTA/Metro-North Railroad Beacon Line to the east. A senior residential community of 95 detached units is planned here, with vehicle access via Creekside Road. The Town would like the developer of this site to include a direct pedestrian connection to the Hamlet Center via a foot bridge over the creek that would tie into planned Hopewell Recreation Area trails.
- , *Deer Run* is the name given to the proposed development of the Hopewell Cedar site just north of the Hamlet Center and MTA/Metro-North Railroad's Beacon Line. The parcel is in a Conservation Residential Development Overlay Zone, which permits 2-4 units per acre. Given its location this site offers excellent opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle connections to both the

Mid-County Rail Trail and the Hamlet Center, although the latter would require the provision of a safe crossing of the Beacon Line. The developer, Toll Brothers, is currently seeking approval of 281 detached units from the Planning Board.

- , The *Lake Walton* area indicated in Figure 2-2 has recently been purchased by PRM realty, which is interested in pursuing a clustered development of 100 single family units.
- , *Twin Creeks*, off of Route 376, is immediately south of the Cannon Property. A site plan, which shows a planned use development incorporating mixed densities of 254 residential units, has been submitted to the Town for this site. Some infrastructure was implemented by a previous developer.
- , *Unity Plaza* is a new commercial development that includes a major supermarket. It is located on the north side of Route 82, directly behind the Post Office. The town is ready to grant final approval, after approvals by the Dutchess County Board of Health, the State Department of Environmental Conservation, and MTA Metro-North. The project includes a signalized access on Route 82, as well as sidewalks and an internal feeder road.

## **2.2 Transportation Network**

This section presents existing pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and road infrastructure and conditions in the project area. Although this is a pedestrian study, data collection was not confined to the pedestrian mode since pedestrians interact with other modes. The pedestrian environment is directly affected by other modes, most notably motorized transportation and its accompanying infrastructure.

### ***Bicycles and Pedestrians***

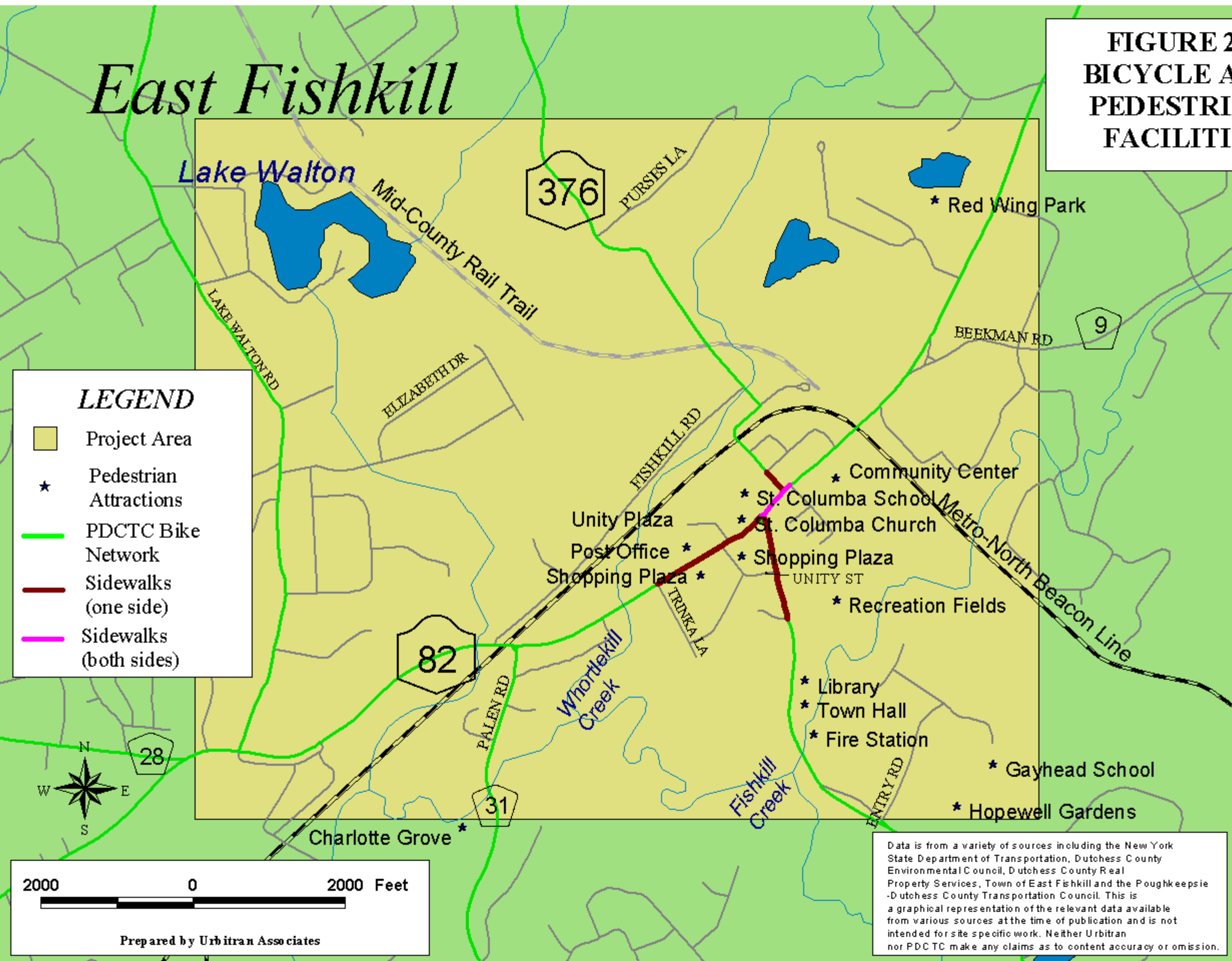
The project area is characterized by some curbed sidewalks in the Hamlet Center commercial and mixed use district. There are limited and inconsistent paved shoulders on state highways that provide some utility for pedestrians and bicyclists. Finally, there are informal, unmarked and unpaved trails in some sections of the project area that are used for pedestrian and bicycle travel.

#### ***Sidewalks***

Figure 2-3 shows the location of sidewalks in the project area. There are sidewalks on the north side of the road on Route 82 from Trinka Lane to its western intersection with Route 376. Sidewalks continue on Route 82 on both sides of the road from that point east to Church Street. The only other road with segments of sidewalks is Route 376. South of Route 82, sidewalks extend to the entrance of Hopewell Recreation Area on the west side of Route 376. North of

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**FIGURE 2-3  
BICYCLE AND  
PEDESTRIAN  
FACILITIES**



Route 82, a sidewalk extends about half of the distance towards the grade crossing with the MTA/Metro-North Railroad Beacon Line.

Pavement conditions of sidewalks in the project area are generally good. Sidewalks on Route 82 are concrete, have 5 feet clear width, and are curbed. In most cases, a small buffer area of approximately 1-2 feet of grass or red brick is provided between the roadway and sidewalk. On Route 376 sidewalks are bituminous. South of Route 82 these are mainly uncurbed and set back from the roadway. There are also gaps present in the sidewalks on Route 376 between Route 82 and the entrance of Hopewell Recreation Area. North of Route 82 the sidewalk is elevated and curbed but the curb soon disappears and only a slightly elevated bituminous strip remains. Parked cars were observed on this strip, making pedestrian use impossible.

#### *Crosswalks/Pedestrian traffic lights*

Marked crosswalks are present at two locations in the project area. These are at the two three-legged signalized intersections of Route 82 and Route 376. Both intersections have pedestrian signals that are activated by push buttons. Marked crosswalks are present across Route 82 on the east side only of both of the intersections. In addition, the eastern intersection has a crosswalk across 376 on the north side of the intersection.

#### *PDCTC proposed bicycle network*

PDCTC has developed a bicycle network that was adopted in 1996 as part of its *Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan* and readopted in 1998 as part of its *Transportation Plan Update*. This includes proposed paved shoulders on a number of roadways in the project area as well as the use of the abandoned Maybrook rail corridor as an off-road bicycle path.

The following roads within the project area are part of the network as indicated in Figure 2-3:

- Route 82
- Route 376
- Palen Road (CR 31)
- Lake Walton Road

It is important to realize that inclusion in the bicycle network does not signify that an adequate bicycle facility is present. In fact, all of the bicycle network roads in the project area were recommended for improvements in the 1996 plan. Wider shoulders were suggested for Route 82, Route 376, and Palen Road, while resurfacing was recommended for Lake Walton Road.



### *Paved shoulders*

Figure 2-4 shows the shoulder widths of the roads on the bicycle network. These are classified into three categories - shoulders of less than 2 feet of width (red), shoulders of 2 to 4 feet (yellow), and shoulders of more than 4 feet on both sides of the road (green). It can be seen that the latter condition is found on only a few areas of Route 82 west of the Hamlet Center. Areas with shoulders from 2 to 4 feet include much of Route 376 north and south of Route 82 and Palen Road. Areas with paved shoulders of 0 to 2 feet include all of Lake Walton Road in the study area, Route 82 and Route 376 in the Hamlet Center, as well as Route 82 east of the Hamlet Center.

### *Off-road trails*

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities include those that are off-road and dedicated to non-motorized modes. Currently, the only facilities of this type in the study area are either informal or in the planning stages. There are informal, unpaved trails associated with the residential developments off Lake Walton Road. Additionally, a number of trails are planned in the project area. The Town Recreation Department has plans to develop two trail systems, both centered around the Hopewell Recreation Area. An active trail system will provide paved paths for recreation and a passive trail system will offer paths with a wood chip surface. Both systems are primarily recreational, but can be considered for transportation uses as well. Finally, the Town has plans to open up to public use a rail-trail on the abandoned Maybrook rail corridor, using a semi-permeable surface to allow for use by pedestrian and wider tire bicycles.

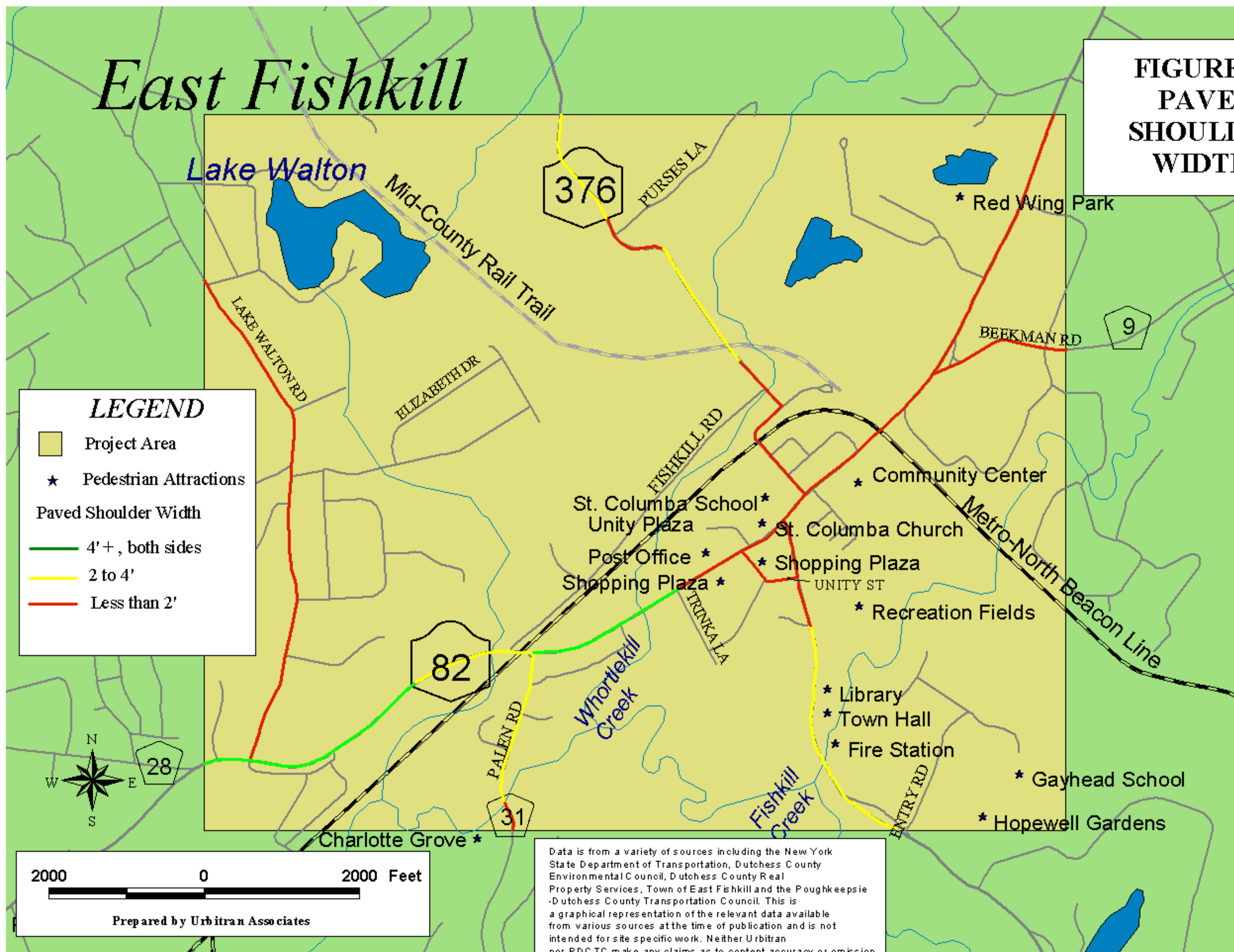
## ***Roads***

The project area contains two state highways, Route 82 and Route 376, and two county roads, CR 9 (Beekman Road) and CR 31 (Palen Road). In addition, Lake Walton Road, a town road, is an important collector road in the project area.

Route 82, which begins at Route 52 in the Town of Fishkill, enters the project area from the west, intersects with Route 376 near the center of the project area, and then heads northeast out of the project area towards the Village of Millbrook in central Dutchess County. Route 376 runs north-south through the project area. Outside of the project area, it continues to the Town of Poughkeepsie to the northwest and terminates at Route 52 within East Fishkill to the south. Route 82 and Route 376 meet close to the center of the project area, which is also the area where commercial and mixed-use development is the most concentrated (i.e., Hopewell Hamlet Center). For a very short stretch Route 82 and Route 376 overlap.

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**FIGURE 2-4  
PAVED  
SHOULDER  
WIDTHS**



Palen Road provides another connection between Route 82 and Route 52, paralleling Route 376. Beekman Road diverges from Route 82 in the northeast part of the project area, running east to provide access to the Taconic State Parkway and the Town of Beekman. Lake Walton Road intersects with Route 82 near the southwest corner of the project area and runs north-south along the western edge of the project area.

Figure 2-5 shows the road network with posted speed limits. Speed limits on major roads in the project area range from 35 to 45 miles per hour (mph). Speed limits within the Hamlet Center on Route 82 and Route 376 are 35 mph. There are also several warning signs with speed advisory plates posted that recommend lower speeds at key locations. Although no vehicle speed data was collected, there is anecdotal information that the posted speed limits, particularly in the Hamlet Center, are routinely exceeded.

Figure 2-5 also shows traffic volumes on sections of state and county highways in the project area where traffic counts were collected by NYSDOT in 1996 or 1998. Based on these counts, average annual daily traffic (AADT) was calculated. Volumes are represented by bandwidth, with wider bandwidths representing greater volumes. Route 82 had traffic volumes ranging from 13,546 to 20,085 AADT, with the highest volumes recorded between County Route 28 and Palen Road, and the lowest volumes between the Route 376 overlap and Beekman Road. AADT was determined on only one section of Route 376, from Fishkill Road to Miller Road. Volumes were 5,739 AADT at this location.

### ***Transit***

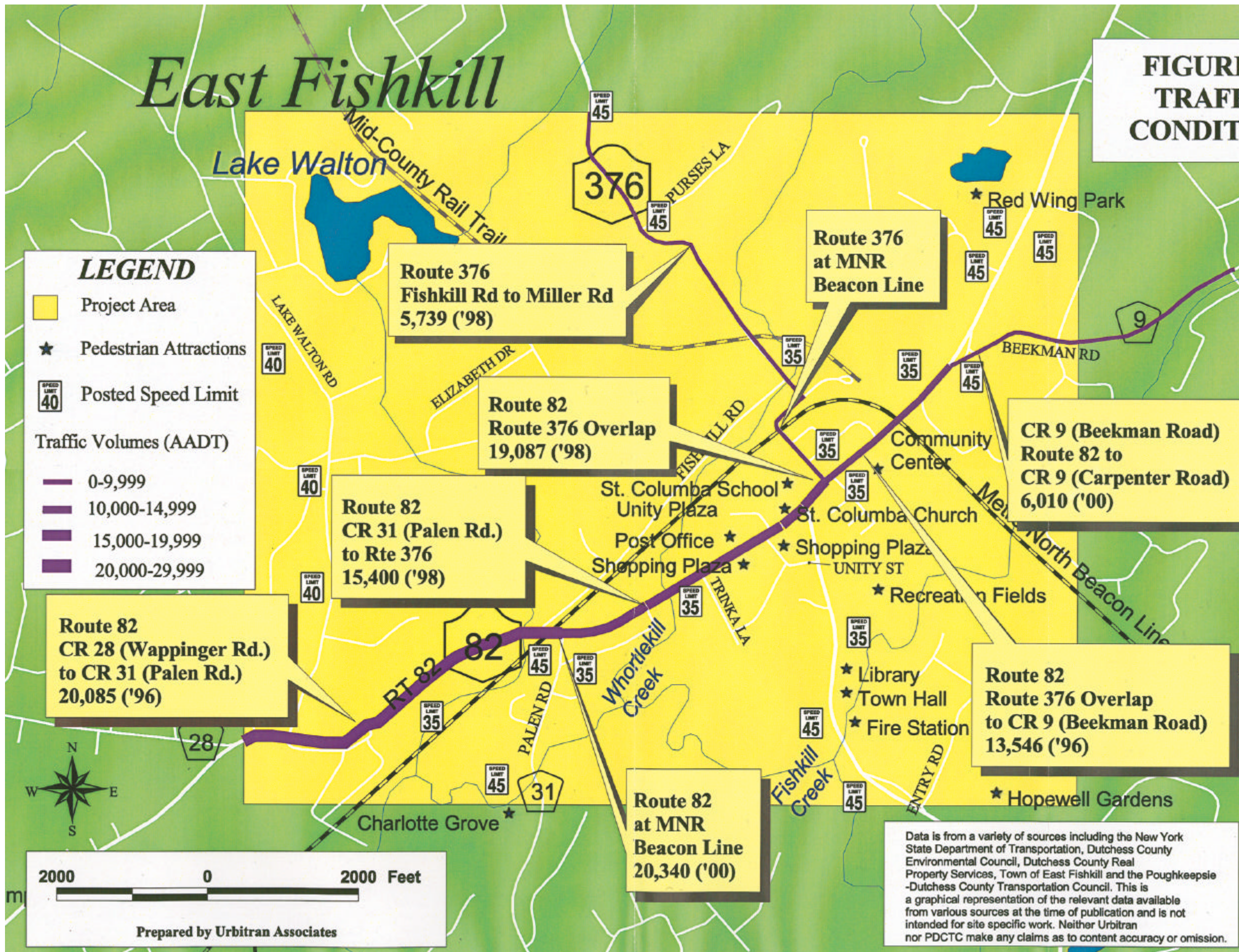
Although Hopewell Hamlet was once a major rail junction, there is currently no passenger rail service in East Fishkill. Residents must drive to the west to access MTA/Metro-North Railroad's Hudson Line or to the east to access MTA/Metro-North Railroad's Harlem Line.

Three bus routes serve the project area, operated by the Dutchess County LOOP system. Route coverage and major time points are shown in Figure 2-6. All LOOP buses operate on a flag stop basis.

- , LOOP 3-A provides three daily round trips between Poughkeepsie's Galleria Mall and Hark Plaza in Wappingers, with routing through Hopewell Hamlet. Service is provided Monday through Saturday. Weekday service enters and exits the project area on Route 82, with a stop at the shopping plaza between Unity Street and Route 376, where the bus turns back. One daily trip in each direction continues past Hopewell Hamlet to Sylvan Lake on Saturdays only.
- , LOOP 4 provides service between Dutchess Mall on Route 9 in Fishkill and Hopewell Hamlet. Nine daily one-way trips are provided Monday through Friday. Routing includes a loop beginning



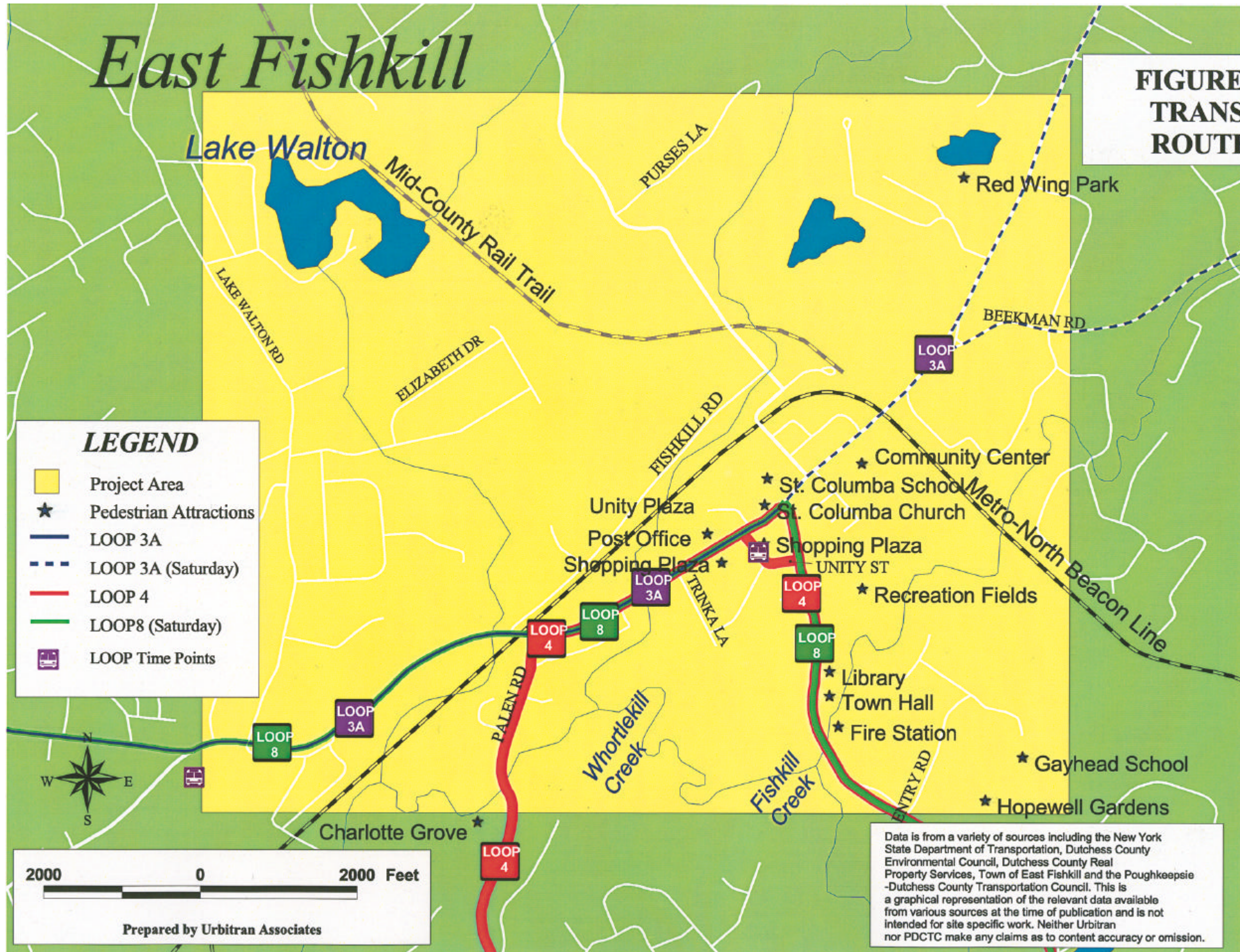
**FIGURE 2-5  
TRAFFIC  
CONDITIONS**





# East Fishkill

**FIGURE 2-6  
TRANSIT  
ROUTES**





and ending at Route 52, utilizing Palen Road, Route 82, and Route 376, with a stop at the shopping plaza between Unity Street and Route 376.

- , LOOP 8 provides once-a-day route deviation service between the Town of Amenia and 44 Plaza in Poughkeepsie. On Saturdays the route provides service through Hopewell Hamlet, entering the project area on Route 82 from the west, making a stop at the shopping plaza between Unity Street and Route 376, and heading south on Route 376.

### ***Vehicle Crashes***

Table 2-1 specifies locations within the project area that were either among the top fifteen intersections or top fifteen road segments for crashes in the Town of East Fishkill from 1995 to 1998. The leading crash intersection location in the project area was at Route 376 and Route 82 (both intersections), where 13 crashes took place, while the segment of road with the greatest number of crashes was on Route 82 in the northeast corner of the project area.

### ***Pedestrian Crashes***

Traffic crashes involving pedestrians within or just outside of the project area between the years of 1995 and 1998 were obtained from the Dutchess County Traffic Safety Board. Table 2-2 details the seven crashes that occurred. Some general characteristics of these crashes are:

- , All crashes took place in the afternoon or evening
- , 1 of the 7 crashes involved a fatality
- , Weather did not appear to be a factor in these crashes
- , Contributing factors in each case appeared to be related to the driver rather than the pedestrian

Figure 2-7 shows the locations of each of the seven crashes. Although two of the crashes occurred in the Hamlet Center, no general pattern emerged, and crashes were distributed throughout the project area.

### ***Programmed and Proposed Transportation Projects***

Future transportation projects in the project area should be noted as they may have an effect on the pedestrian environment and provide opportunities for improvements. Figure 2-8 illustrates three category of projects - new roads that have been proposed by the Town of East Fishkill through its Comprehensive

Plan update process, bridge and road projects that have been funded for implementation by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), and one project recommendation from PDCTC's Regional Transportation Plan.

**Table 2-1**  
**Hopewell Hamlet Pedestrian Plan**  
**High Traffic Crash Locations 1995-1998**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Intersection/ Road Segment</b>	<b># of Crashes</b>
Rt. 82 & Rt. 376	Intersection	13
Rt. 82 & Palen Road	Intersection	11
Rt. 82 and Lake Walton Road	Intersection	9
Rt. 82 between Foster & Clove Branch Road	Road Segment	15
Rt. 376 between Entry Road and Ferland Road	Road Segment	11
Rt. 82 between Trinkka Lane and Unity Street	Road Segment	10
Rt. 376 between Oak Street and Fishkill Road	Road Segment	10

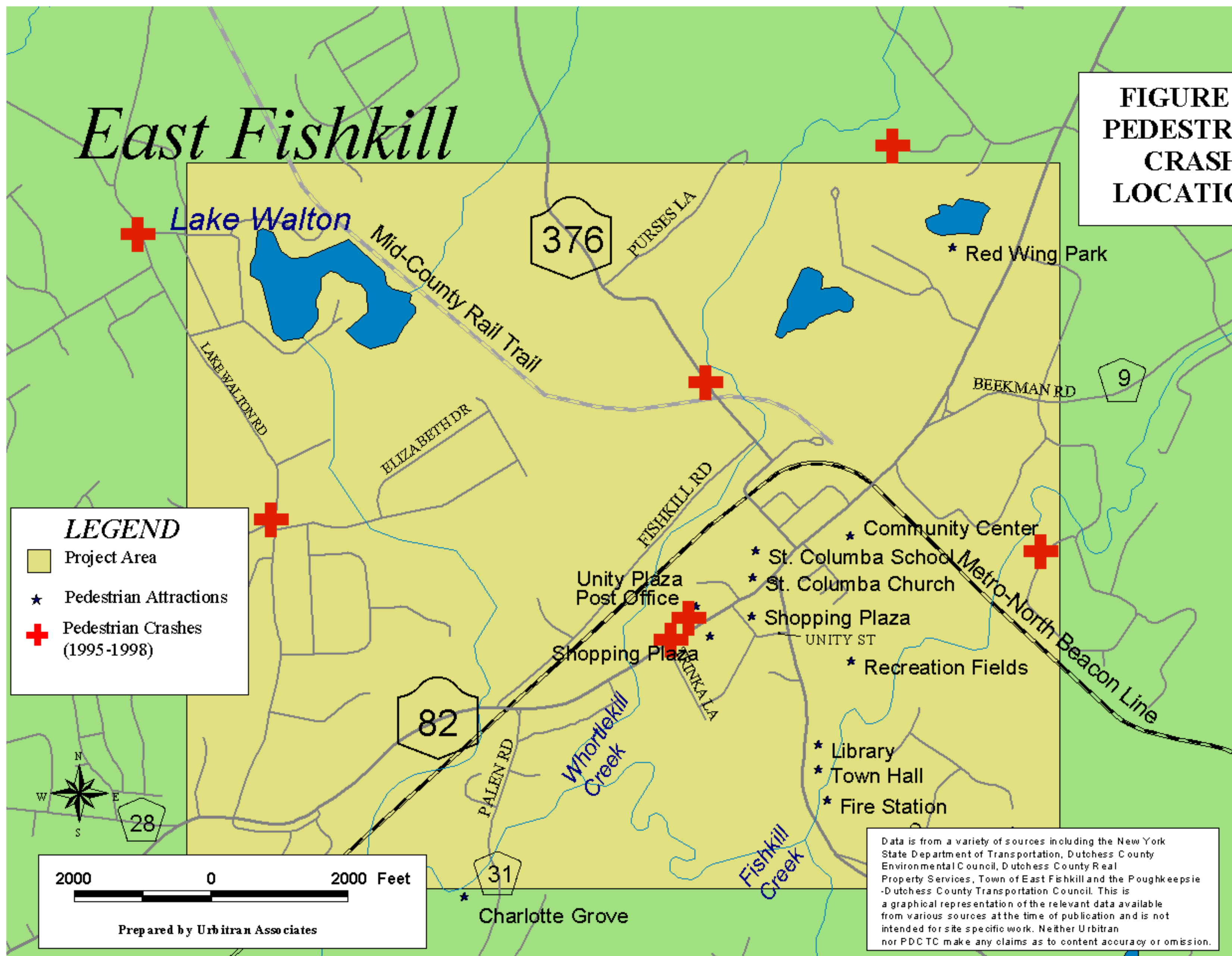
Source: NYSDOT

**Table 2-2**  
**Hopewell Hamlet Pedestrian Plan**  
**Pedestrian Crashes**

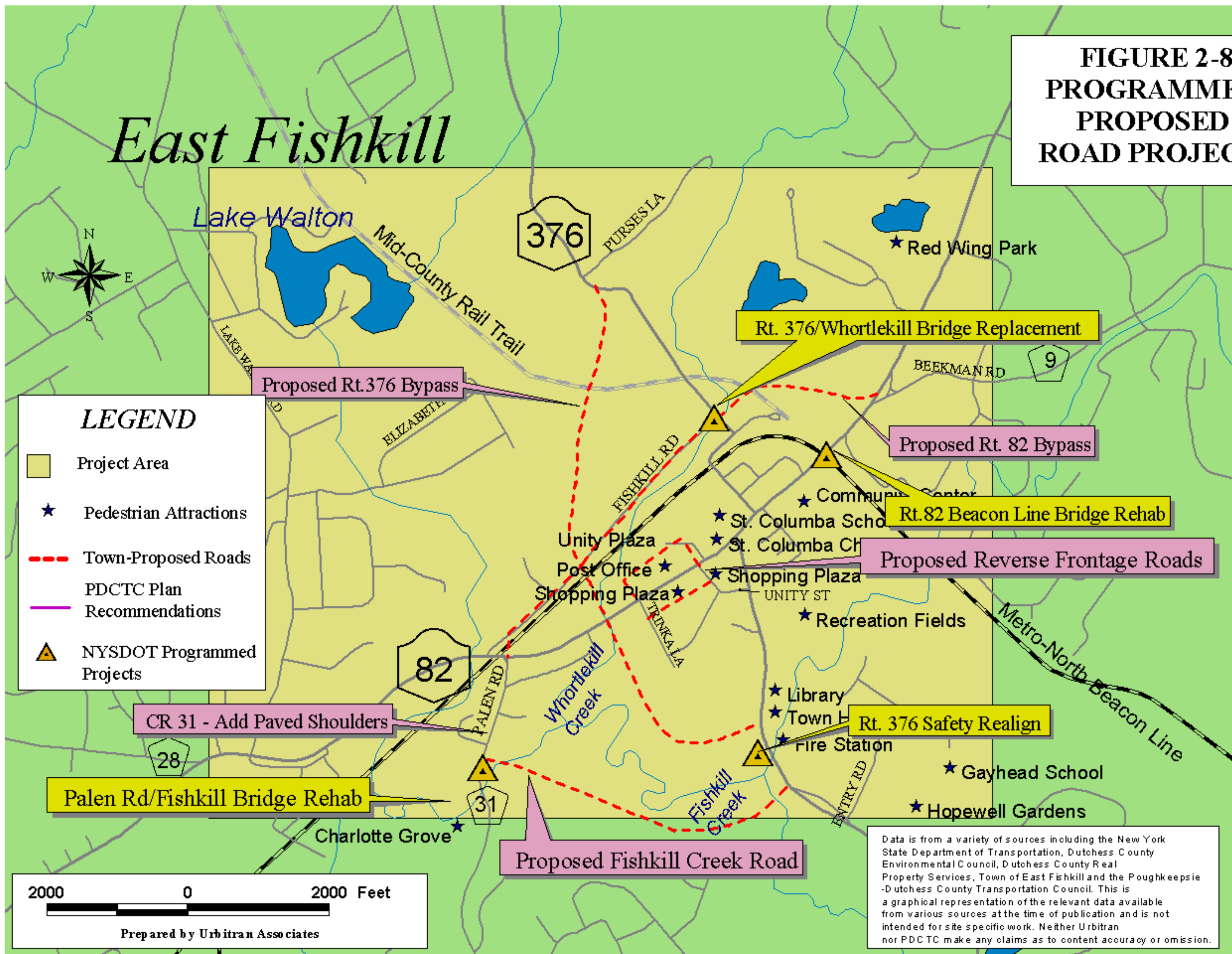
<b>Location</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time of Day</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Light Condition</b>	<b>Weather</b>	<b>Apparent Contributing Factor</b>
Dairy Mart Parking Lot off Rt. 82	01/09/95	Afternoon	Injury	Daylight	Clear	Driver inattention
Carol Drive west of Beekman Road	08/20/95	Evening	Injury	Dusk	Clear	Driver inattention
Rt. 376 north of Fishkill Road	01/08/97	Evening	Fatality	Dark, Road unlighted	Clear	Unspecified driver error
Lake Walton Road at Homestead Drive	07/25/97	Afternoon	Injury	Daylight	Clear	Driver glare, driver obstructed view
Cavelo Road south of Clove Branch Road	09/29/97	Evening	Injury	Dusk	Clear	Windshield inadequate
Rt. 82 east of Trinka Lane	08/05/98	NA	Injury	NA	NA	Driver inattention
Lake Walton Road at Brescia Boulevard	10/23/98	Afternoon	Injury	Daylight	Clear	Unsafe speed, driver inexperience

Source: Dutchess County Traffic Safety Board





**FIGURE 2-8  
PROGRAMMED/  
PROPOSED  
ROAD PROJECTS**



The Town has proposed four new roads in the transportation chapter of its Comprehensive Plan. These roads are intended to alleviate traffic congestion in the Hamlet Center as well as encourage development in the Hamlet area. They include bypasses to the major state highways and a pair of reverse frontage roads that would move access to commercial establishments off of Route 82. The town supports all of the proposals but realizes that they may not all be funded and implemented. It should be noted that all of these proposals are at the conceptual stage and have not yet been evaluated for feasibility.

#### *Town-Proposed Roads*

- A *Route 82 Bypass* would utilize the existing Fishkill Road, extending it to the east to intersect with Route 82 across from Beekman Road. Fishkill Road would be upgraded and realigned with Palen Road. This would allow through traffic to bypass the Hamlet Center via a northern route. Because this proposed road would have to cross MTA/Metro-North Railroad's Beacon Line, MTA/Metro-North will have an interest in its development.
- A *Route 376 Bypass* would allow through traffic using that road to avoid congestion in the Hamlet Center by providing a road to the west of it. The new road would diverge from Route 376 near the municipal complex south of the Hamlet Center, and rejoin it well north of Route 82 near Purses Lane, with an alignment to the west of Whortlekill Creek.
- Two *Reverse Frontage Roads* off of either side of Route 82 between Trinkla Lane and Unity Plaza are conceptualized by the Town. The major purpose would be to provide access to the commercial establishments along Route 82 from the back, drawing more traffic off of it and allowing for closure of some access drives and facilitating pedestrian crossings. A variation of the northern reverse frontage road is included in the site plan for the new Unity Plaza development and will be completed this year.
- A proposed *Fishkill Creek Road* would provide a connection between Route 376 and Palen Road to the south of the Hamlet Center.

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*, NYSDOT Programmed Projects*

These projects were identified in the current regional Transportation Improvement Program, indicating that money has been allocated to them and they will be implemented barring some unusual circumstance. All of the projects in the study area focus on maintaining existing facilities rather than increasing capacity.

- A Route 376 Safety Realignment has been implemented south of the municipal complex to straighten a curved section.
- Also on Route 376, the bridge over the Whortlekill Creek just south of Fishkill Road is being replaced.
- On Palen Road, the bridge over Fishkill Creek, just south of Route 82, is scheduled to be rehabilitated.
- On Route 82, the rehabilitation of the highway bridge over the MTA/Metro-North Railroad Beacon Line is scheduled.

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*, PDCTC Regional Transportation Plan Recommendations*

The PDCTC included in its regional transportation plan specific recommendations that are eligible for future transportation improvement plans. This included one recommendation within the project area.

- *Addition of Paved Shoulders on CR 31(Palen Road) from Route 52 to Route 82.* This project would help to complete PDCTC's proposed regional bicycle network.